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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1646  
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RUCPDC/NOAA NMFS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC  
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC  
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 NEW DELHI 001257

STATE FOR OES/PCI, OES/STC, OES/SAT, OES/EGC, AND SCA/INS  
STATE FOR STAS  
STATE PASS TO NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS  
HHS PASS TO NIH  
STATE PASS TO USAID  
STATE FOR SCA, OES (STAS FEDOROFF), OES/PCI STEWART; OES/IHA SINGER  
PASS TO HHS/OGHA (STEIGER/HICKEY), CDC (BLOUNT/FARRELL), NIH/FIC  
(GLASS/MAMPILLY), FDA (LUMPKIN/WELSCH, GENEVA FOR HOFMAN)  
PASS TO MAS/DAS/JESTRADA  
PASS TO MAC/DAS/HVINEYARD

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [AMED](#) [CASC](#) [KSCA](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [BEXP](#) [EINV](#) [PGOV](#)  
TSPL, TRGY, TNGD, EIND, ENRG, KGHG, IN

SUBJECT: NEW DELHI ESTH REPORT: MAY 2008 FIRST WEEK

REF: NEW DELHI 0976

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¶1. (U) Summary: This cable is the continuation of the Biweekly Reporting Cables from Mission India ESTH Office to be sent out the first and third week of every month. Inputs in this biweekly include the Indian Space Research Organization's launch of 10 satellites, the GOI's initiative to develop new instrumentation for detection and mitigation of water pollution, and the ESTH office plans to start a blog. The environment section notes the launch of the Indian State of Environment Atlas and discusses the Delhi State government's environment friendly initiatives. The health section presents an overview of the recent Avian Influenza outbreak in Tripura, HIV/AIDS related activities, new generic drug price control, tougher law against female feticide, and update on Measles vaccine related deaths.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UPDATE - ESTH OFFICE TO LAUNCH BLOG  
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¶2. (U) US - India engagement in science and technology has grown by leaps and bounds and the current atmosphere provides immense scope for both private and public sector engagement. In this backdrop, there is need for an information source on ESTH in India. The State Department's Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy in its final Report "The State Department in 2025" suggests that the USG more effectively use its expertise in Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) as a tool for diplomacy. The Report notes there is an urgent need to more effectively leverage the advancements in Information Technology to communicate and disseminate information and ensure baseline SET literacy among all appropriate personnel.

In pursuance of these USG goals, SciCouns recognized the need to set up a blog in collaboration with Mission's Open Source Center (OSC). The blog entitled "U.S. and India: A Common S&T Genetic Code", is expected to serve as a single platform for information on U.S. - India S&T engagement and a broad spectrum of related activities. The blog is up and running. The next issue of the biweekly will provide details of the webpage access.

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INDIA'S SPACE AGENCY PUTS IN ORBIT 10 SATELLITES IN A SINGLE LAUNCH  
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13. (U) The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) launched 10 satellites weighing a total of 820 Kgs using its Polar Satellite launch Vehicle (PSLV) on 28 April 2008. The payload included two Indian satellites and 8 nano satellites weighing 5 Kgs each from Canada, Japan, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. The two Indian satellites consisted of a remote sensing satellite CARTOSAT 2-A weighing 695 Kgs, the thirteenth such satellite launched by India as well as an experimental satellite known as the IMS-1 (Indian Mini Satellite) weighing 87 Kgs. The IMS-1 is designed to test India's capability to manufacture mini satellites as well as new instrumentation to be used during the Indian moon missions. This is the fiftieth satellite launch by ISRO to date. The Chairman of ISRO has said in the media that all satellites are functioning well and India hopes to undertake 70 additional launches by 2012. SciFSN has learned from ISRO that it is currently working on nano and micro satellites, and has given a grant to Anna University in Chennai to develop a nano satellite. This will be a first from an Indian university.

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GOI INITIATIVE FOR WATER POLLUTION DETECTION  
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14. (U) The Department of Science and Technology (DST) under the Ministry of Science and Technology has taken the initiative to develop novel sensors and instrumentation for water pollution detection and mitigation including removal of physical, chemical and biological contaminants. In order to ensure that new technology developed under the initiative actually reaches the market, DST has invited academic and R&D institutes to present proposals in collaboration with industry. A meeting to assess the project proposals was held at the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur from April 23-25, 2008. About 40 proposals were presented by researchers from academic and R&D institutes from all over India. The proposals covered a wide range of topics including development of simple electrochemical techniques and advanced micro arrays for detection and removal of a wide range of contaminants including arsenic, lead, organic and inorganic industrial effluents. Topics also included new legislation and regulation to control water pollution (Septel).

15. (U) At the meeting, SciFSN delivered a talk on novel nano carbon based sensors and systems for water pollution detection and mitigation. At the meeting, DST acknowledged the support received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on rules, regulations, and technologies pertaining to water pollution management and expressed keen interest in further collaboration with USG agencies on water pollution.

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ENVIRONMENT UPDATE- DELHI OFFICIALS DISCUSS NEW INITIATIVES  
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16. (U) With Delhi's population expected to rise to 24 million by 2020, its environmental challenges will be equally daunting. The Delhi Government's dynamic Environment Secretary, Mr. J.K. Dadoo, outlined to EmbOffs plans to reduce the environmental impact of the burgeoning population. Among them included the already implemented thirty percent subsidy on purchase of the "Reva," a battery operated car manufactured in India. He also stated water harvesting structures will be made mandatory in all large establishments such as schools, hospitals, and hotels and commercial complexes. The Delhi government is also testing the efficacy of a composting

machine that will convert kitchen waste into raw compost in fifteen minutes. Once tested, large establishments will be encouraged to use the machine to reduce their waste. The Delhi Government also intends to target air pollution caused by trucks in Delhi by developing a "diesel pill" that will help burn heavier elements in diesel fuel and thereby reduce emissions. Delhi also plans to build capacity in the area of green buildings by holding workshops for architects to encourage the use of environment-friendly technologies in new construction.

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EARTH DAY LAUNCH OF THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ATLAS  
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17. (U) On the occasion of Earth Day 2008, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, in partnership with Development Alternatives, an NGO, launched the first digital environment atlas of India. It is available at <http://www.soeatlas.org>. The atlas is an excellent interactive website of the current state of India's environment in terms of land, air, water and biodiversity. (Reftel)

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HEALTH UPDATE - FRESH OUTBREAK OF AVIAN INFLUENZA  
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18. (U) Tripura, a north eastern state of India, reported a fresh outbreak of Avian Influenza (AI) in poultry about 20 kilometers from the capital of Agartala. State authorities have decided to cull at least 10,000 birds in the eight gram panchayats (village zones) of the district Mohanpur. Tripura shares 856 kilometers of international border with neighboring Bangladesh. In view of recent AI outbreaks in West Bengal and Tripura, a senior official level meeting was convened by the Ministry of Health (MOH) in mid-April. The Government of India (GOI) has requested the World Health Organization (WHO) to organize an urgent technical consultation meeting to review and identify gaps in its AI surveillance and control related activities. The meeting took place April 30 in New Delhi and was attended by a team of experts from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Influenza Division and USAID's Regional Avian Influenza Advisor. CDC team members will also be providing technical guidance on expanded surveillance and disease burden protocol development from 1-16 May 2008. In view of the recent incidences in India in West Bengal and Tripura, The Government of Nepal issued a bird flu alert and is testing poultry along the border with India as a precautionary measure. Newspapers have reported that the tests were negative.

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INDIA PARTICIPATES IN BANGKOK AIDS PREPAREDNESS MEETING  
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19. (U) India was one of five countries which participated in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Preparedness II (PEPFAR-II) Consultation for Asian programs, held on April 22 and 23 in Bangkok with Ambassador Mark Dybul and leadership from CDC and USAID. China, Russia, Thailand, and Indonesia also attended. Participants shared current and future strategies for moving from a "Direct Implementation" to a "Technical Assistance (TA)" model over the second five year phase of PEPFAR. India and Thailand appeared to be already engaged significantly in the TA model. The India PEPFAR team hopes to work with GOI and strengthen the existing program and develop indicators to evaluate this model. The National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has requested a CDC team to carry out a review of the current status and also to be the lead agency for Lab TA and coordinate with other lab partners in India including WHO and provide long-term technical assistance. A CDC team of laboratory experts on temporary duty has completed the assessment and will debrief the Director General of NACO before departing from India.

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CLINICAL TRIALS REGISTRATION AND REPORTING  
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¶10. (U) The Indian Pharma industry is growing rapidly and increasingly U.S. and other multinational companies are investing in R&D and clinical research outsourcing to India. The clinical research industry, valued at USD 100 million in 2007, is expected to grow to approximately USD 300 million by 2010 according to agencies such as CenterWatch and Frost and Sullivan. In an effort to obtain a database covering all clinical research, the Indian Clinical Registry (ICR) was launched in July 2007 although registration of clinical trials in the ICR was not made mandatory. However, editors of 11 Indian biomedical journals have decided to consider only registered clinical trials data for publication in their journals. This requires all trials begun after June 2008 to be registered prospectively and those prior to this date be registered

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retrospectively. This is in accordance with a three year-old decision of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

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UPDATE ON PHARMACEUTICAL PRICING POLICY  
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¶11. (U) The Pharmaceutical Advisory Forum comprising representatives from the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (MoCF), the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), consumer organizations and State drug controllers, has concluded that margins on non-branded generic drugs be fixed at 400 percent of the maximum allowed post manufacturing expenses and requested the Ministry to work on framing guidelines. A study conducted by the NPPA has revealed that some branded generic drugs are sold at very high prices making them unaffordable for poor people. Non-branded generic drugs constitute 5-7 percent of the USD 6 billion market and are sold by pharmacists at margins of nearly 1,000 percent.

¶12. (SBU) A group of ministers (GoM) headed by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar met on April 30 to finalize recommendations for a new pharma policy. The draft policy has called for increasing the span of price controls on the USD 13.75 billion domestic drug market from the current 20 to over 35 percent. This will mean an addition of 354 drugs to the list of price-controlled medicines. The GoM is also expected to give recommendations on the regulation of trade margins on all medicines, public procurement of drugs, price negotiation of patented drugs and medical devices, in addition to legislation of new Acts to compound all drug-related offences. Indian industry is hoping that the GoM will recognize the role of market forces and competition in deciding the prices of medicines.

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INDIA TO PRODUCE AND PROVIDE BLOOD CLOTTING PROTEINS  
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¶13. (U) India will soon produce and provide blood clotting proteins F8 and F9 to hemophiliacs. The Ministry of Health is finalizing plans to set up India's first Plasma Fractionation Unit (PFU) through the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) to manufacture the proteins and is expected to start production in two years. NACO Director General K. Sujatha Rao said "in full capacity, the PFU will process 150,000 liters of plasma per year. F8 and F9 proteins will then be supplied free of cost."

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TOUGHER LAW AGAINST FEMALE FETICIDE  
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¶14. (U) India has lost 50 million girls to female feticide and the GOI has decided to make the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act more stringent. This will strip licenses from non-complying health practitioners, raise fines, and add a provision for imprisonment up to 3 years. Only two people have been convicted since the PNDT Act was implemented in 1994. The Indian Prime Minister addressed representatives of all 35 State governments on Monday, April 28 to ask them to clamp down on sex determination. The Census in 2001 had registered a drop to 927 girls per 1,000 boys compared to 976 girls to 1,000 boys in 1991. Since 2001, India is

losing about 900,000 girls a year. Dr. Francisco Songane, Director of the WHO partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health said "India, along with Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia contribute to

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over 50 percent of all maternal and child deaths globally."

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MEASLES VACCINE DEATHS  
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¶15. (U) Four ten month old infants, three girls and a boy, died after they were administered an anti-measles vaccine during two routine immunization camps in Tamil Nadu's Thiruvallur district. The infants died soon after the vaccine was administered. The cause of death is believed to be anaphylaxis which occurs in 1 out of 100,000 cases. Five other children were also hospitalized. The Ministry of Health (MOH) has rushed a two member team lead by Mr. Pawan Murti of the National Polio Surveillance Program (NPSP) to the affected district. Dr. R.K. Srivastava of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) informed media the DGHS has no information about the incident as the vaccination program is State-run.

¶16. (U) The deaths occurred in only two of the 450 immunization centers set up in the district. Dr. Sanjeev Bagai said that death can occur if the cold chain is not maintained or if unsterilized needles are used. Samples from various batches of the vaccine allocated for Tamil Nadu have been sent to the Central Research Institute (CRI) in Kasauli for tests. Presently, the Serum Institute in Pune is the major supplier of measles vaccines to the GOI. However, in February 2008, the MOH allowed the Human Biologicals Institute (HBI), a public sector vaccine producer, to supply the vaccine as this was priced one Rupee less than the Serum Institute vaccines. A Tamil Nadu public health department official reported in the press that the cold chain protocol was not broken. A detailed investigation is underway to ascertain the reasons for the deaths.

MULFORD